

REMARKS:

1. Rejections

Claims 1, 2, and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly rendered obvious by Applicant's Admitted Prior Art ("AAPA") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,307,038 to Ishimaru. Applicant respectfully traverses.

2. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, and 4 stand rejected as allegedly rendered obvious by AAPA in view of Ishimaru. Specifically, the Office Action alleges that AAPA describes each and every element of claim 1 except for the projection portion contacting one of the annular flanges of the ring member. Nevertheless, the Office Action alleges that Ishimaru supplies this missing element. Applicant respectfully traverses.

In order for the Office Action to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, at least three criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to those of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the primary reference as proposed by the Office Action. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the prior art references must disclose or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP 2143. For the reasons set forth below, Applicant maintains that the Office Action fails to establish a prima facie case of obviousness.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to describe an electromagnetic assembly comprising a ring case, a coil bobbin, and a connector arrangement. The ring case comprises a first portion having a passage formed therein, and a second portion having an annular groove formed therein. The passage has a first open end and a second open end. Moreover, the coil bobbin is disposed in the annular groove, and the coil bobbin comprises a ring member. The ring member comprises a tubular spool with a pair of annular flanges projecting radially from the tubular spool. Further, the connector arrangement comprises a body portion, and a projection portion extending from the body portion and into the passage. Specifically, a first end of the projection portion contacts the body portion, and a second end of the projection portion contacts one of the annular flanges and is flush with the second open end of the passage. See, e.g., Appl'n, Fig. 8 (emphasis added.)

In contrast, AAPA describes an electromagnetic assembly 7 comprising a connector 5, a coil bobbin 3, and a ring case 4. Connector 5 may comprise a case 5a and a

projection portion 5a₃. Coil bobbin 3 may comprise a ring member 1, ring member 1 may comprise a pair of annular flanges (not numbered but shown in **Fig. 4**), and ring case 4 may have an opening/passage 4a formed therein. Opening/passage 4a has a first end and second end, and the first end of opening/passage 4a receives projection portion 5a₃ of connector 5, such that a gap is formed between projection portion 5a₃ and the second end of opening/passage 4a. (Emphasis added.) Moreover, case 5a is fixed to ring case 4 by a pair of hooks 10a, and coil bobbin 3 is fixed to ring case 4 by resin 13 poured into ring case 4. An O-ring 11, which is positioned between case 5a and ring case 4, prevents resin 13 from leaking outside ring case 4 through a gap formed between projection portion 5a₃ and case 5a. As such, resin 13 fills the gap between projection portion 5a₃ and the second end of opening/passage 4a. See, e.g., Appl'n, Page 1, Lines 24-31; Page 2, Lines 16-21; and Fig. 4.

Nevertheless, because the gap is formed between projection portion 5a₃ and the second end of opening/passage 4a, projection portion 5a₃ does not contact either of the annular flanges of ring member 1 when projection portion 5a₃ is positioned within opening/passage 4a, and the end of projection portion 5a₃ is not flush with the second end of opening/passage 4a.

Ishimaru describes an electromagnetic clutch comprising a yoke 3, a coil bobbin 17, and a terminal base 27. Yoke 3 has an annular groove 3a formed therein, and a hole 3e formed therethrough. Hole 3e has a first open end and a second open end. Coil bobbin 17 comprises an inner coil bobbin 18 and an outer coil bobbin 19, which are joined together and then inserted in annular groove 3a. Moreover, outer coil bobbin 19 includes a cylindrical opening portion 19c, and terminal base 27 comprises a casing 34 which has a protruding opening portion 34a. Cylindrical opening portion 19c is inserted in hole 3e via the first open end of hole 3e. However, protruding opening portion 34a does not extend, such that protruding opening portion 34a is flush with the second open end of hole 3e, i.e., there is a gap formed between the end of protruding opening portion 34a and the second open end of hole 3e. See, e.g., Ishimaru, Fig. 3. (Copy enclosed.) Thus, Ishimaru fails disclose or suggest that a first end of the projection portion contacts the body portion, and a second end of the projection portion contacts one of the annular flanges and is flush with the second open end of the passage, as set forth in claim 1. (Emphasis added.) Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness rejection of amended claim 1.

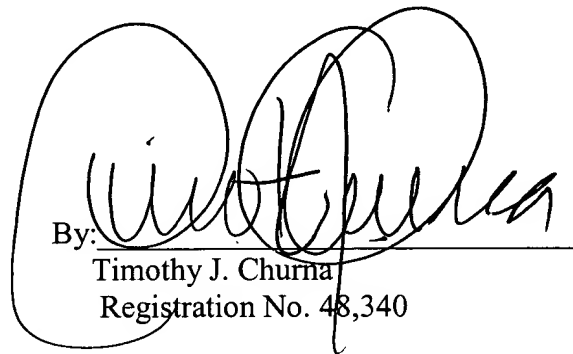
Claims 2 and 4 depend from amended claim 1. “If an independent claim is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious.” MPEP 2143.03 (citations omitted). Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner also withdraw the obviousness rejection of claims 2 and 4.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and such disposition is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that an interview with Applicant's representatives, either in person or by telephone, would expedite prosecution of this application, we would welcome such an opportunity. Applicant believes that no fees are due as a result of this responsive amendment and response to Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment. Nevertheless, in the event of any variance between the fees determined by Applicant and those determined by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, please charge any such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 02-0375.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS LLP

By: 
Timothy J. Churnia
Registration No. 48,340

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Baker Botts LLP
The Warner, Suite 1300
1299 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-2400
(202) 639-7700 (telephone)
(202) 639-7890 (facsimile)

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Enclosure